



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.7946 | FAX (517) 373.2678
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/stamas/

For Immediate Release
April 17, 2006

Contact: Chad Wing
(517) 373-7946

Sen. Stamas prepared to ratify U.S. constitutional amendment counting legal citizens for congressional seat apportionment

LANSING – Congressional seat apportionment should only be based on the census count of legal citizens, said Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland, who has prepared a key resolution that would ratify a proposed constitutional amendment.

Currently, Congress is considering a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution in response to the impact illegal immigrants are having on distribution of congressional seats.

If federal lawmakers approve the measure, Stamas has the resolution needed for Michigan to ratify the amendment.

Congressional seats are apportioned based on each state's population, including both legal and non-legal residents. In 2000, the high presence of non-citizens in states such as Florida, Texas and California caused Michigan and other Midwestern states to lose congressional seats to states with larger illegal resident populations.

"Residents who cannot vote should not be counted in census surveys that affect congressional representation," Stamas said. "Only legal citizens should be counted. Otherwise, it's unfair to legal citizens to have their congressional representation and voices diluted by states with a large number of illegal residents."

For example, in California's 31st Congressional District only 60 percent of the "persons" counted by the census were listed as legal citizens.

The constitutional amendment, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Candice Miller, R-Michigan, would amend the 14th amendment to read "citizens" instead of "persons."

It would take a two-thirds vote of both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to propose a constitutional amendment. If a proposed amendment is approved by both chambers of Congress, then it would be sent to all 50 states for ratification.

At that point, the Stamas joint resolution would be introduced and need to be passed by a majority vote in both the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives in order to ratify the constitutional amendment.

The amendment would only become part of the Constitution if ratified by three-fourths of states.